

THE FIERY FURNACE

BIBLE PASSAGE: Daniel 3
FOCUS VERSES: Psalm 95:6; Revelation 4:11; Hebrews 12:28; Romans 1:16

Summary: When Babylon captured Israel, young men like Daniel and his friends were taken to serve the king. King Nebuchadnezzar built a gold statue and commanded all to worship it or be thrown into a fiery furnace. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused, choosing to honor God. Even when given another chance, they stood firm. They were thrown into the furnace, but the king saw a fourth figure with them, protecting them from harm.

MONTHLY Memory Verse

Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable.

(PSALM 145:3)

BRITE Idea

Only God is worthy of worship.

We will go deeper in God's truth by answering these questions:

HE

WHY IS GOD WORTHY OF WORSHIP?
God is greater than anyone or anything. No one is like Him.

WE

HOW DO WE WORSHIP GOD EVEN WHEN THOSE AROUND US DON'T?
We can trust God is always with us, and He gives courage to honor Him no matter what is happening.

ME

HOW IS GOD INVITING ME TO RESPOND?
Kids will reflect and respond to the truth they learned about God.

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Leader TRAINING

LEADER TRAINING TOPIC: PRAYER REQUESTS

Kids are amazing intercessors, but sometimes can widen the prayer requests so wide that sometimes their prayer requests could benefit with more focus.

- **Whiteboard Requests.** Draw four circles on the board and label each accordingly: "Myself," "People Living at My House", "My Family" and "My Friends." As kids share their requests, explain that they must fit into one of the three circles.
- **Family Requests.** When taking prayer requests, ask kids to share requests for their immediate family, church family or mission's family.
- **20-Second Request.** When sharing prayer requests, explain to kids that each person gets 20 seconds to share their requests so all kids have time to share what they would like the class to pray for that day.
- **Answered Prayers Closing.** So often we bring request after request to God but never return to thank Him for how He answers our prayers. At the end of each week, circle back and ask the kids to share their answered prayers, then have a praise party thanking Him.

NAVIGATING A BROKEN WORLD: PERSECUTION

Over 360 million Christians experience significant persecution in the countries in which they live, including facing kidnapping, jail and even loss of life.* Just like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, believers around the world risk their lives by following the one true God. Some kids in your group may have even encountered times when they were made fun of for being a Christian or for doing the right thing. In today's lesson, kids will see that Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stayed true to their faith even when it made life much harder for them. You can help kids see that God uses persecution to point others toward Him. Around the world the church is growing in countries of persecution. Lead the kids in your group to pray for those around the world who are persecuted.

*For more resources on this topic, check out: britecurriculum.com/resources

ELEMENTARY GLOSSARY

Omnipotent: having unlimited power; stronger than anything

Trust: confidence someone or something is reliable and will do what is expected

Worship: celebrating God for who He is

Worthy: deserving of praise because of what one has done or who they are

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Bible TEACHING

THE FIERY FURNACE
DANIEL 3

PRAY: God, thank You for this great example of courage in Your Word. Teach us to give You all our praise, no matter what happens around us. Amen.

SUPPLIES:
Bible, teaching slides, chair, upbeat music, music player

PREP:
Have some music ready to play during the teaching time. Place a chair at the front of your space.

LEADER TIP:
For smaller groups, have kids play multiple parts.

Say: Just like Isaiah had prophesied, Babylon conquered Judah and God's people were taken captive. Babylon took many young men away from their homes in Judah to train them in the Babylonian ways. These young men included Daniel and three of his friends. The friends were given new names: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Call four volunteers to the front to play Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Say: They honored God in this foreign land and followed His ways.

Have the four actors put their hands over their hearts and make a "serious" face.

Say: God showed His favor on the four young men. They stood out among all the other young men and were given special privileges and honor. Daniel went to work in the king's court.

Have Daniel return to their seat and everyone else wave goodbye.

Say: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were promoted to oversee all of the business of Babylon.

Have the three remaining actors shake hands and congratulate one another.

Say: One day, King Nebuchadnezzar built a massive golden statue. It was 90 feet tall.

Call a new volunteer to the front to play the statue. Have them carefully stand on the chair and freeze in place.

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Bible TEACHING CONTINUED

Say: He commanded the people to bow down and worship the giant statue every time they heard music. Anyone who refused to bow down would be thrown into a blazing furnace as punishment.

Play 30 seconds of music. Invite a few volunteers to the front to bow to the statue.

Say: The music played and everyone bowed down, except Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They refused to worship something other than the one true God.

Show teaching illustration: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego Won't Bow Down.

Have Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego fold their arms and shake their heads no.

Say: When this was reported to King Nebuchadnezzer, he was furious and ordered Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to come before him.

Allow the statue to return to their seat. Call a new volunteer to sit in the chair and play King Nebuchadnezzar. Have Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stand before him.

Say: The king asked, "Is it true that you will not serve my gods or worship my golden image? If you don't, you will be thrown into the fiery furnace. And what god will deliver you from that?"

Have King Nebuchadnezzar spread their hands wide as if asking a question.

Say: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego answered him, "King, even if you throw us in the furnace, our God is able to save us. But even if He doesn't, we still won't worship anything or anyone else."

Have Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego shake their heads no and wag their fingers.

Say: Nebuchadnezzar was even angrier. He gave an order for the furnace to be made seven times hotter than normal. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were tied up and thrown inside.

Have King Nebuchadnezzar pretend to angrily tie them up. Call four new volunteers to be the fiery furnace. Have them sit in a circle, raise their hands and wiggle their fingers to represent fire. Have Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego stand inside the circle.

Say: After a few minutes, Nebuchadnezzar checked on them. He exclaimed, "Didn't we throw three men in there? There are four walking around, and one looks like a son of the gods."

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Bible TEACHING CONTINUED

Show teaching illustration: Fourth Man in the Fire.

Call a new volunteer to stand in the circle as the fourth person in the fire.

Say: The king cried out, "Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, come out!"

Have King Nebuchadnezzar motion for them to come out. Allow the furnace volunteers and the fourth figure to return to their seats.

Say: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out of the furnace completely unharmed. They didn't even smell like smoke. God was with them in the fire and had rescued them. King Nebuchadnezzar praised God and made a new law that no one could speak badly about Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego's God and declared that no one could rescue like the one true God.

Read Daniel 3:28 directly from the Bible: *Nebuchadnezzar answered and said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent His angel and delivered His servants, who trusted in Him, and set aside the king's command, and yielded up their bodies rather than serve and worship any god except their own God.*

Show teaching slide: Point to Jesus.

POINT TO JESUS

Say: Who was in the fire with the three young men? Some people believe it was an angel. Some people believe it was Jesus Himself. Many scholars believe there are moments in the Old Testament when Jesus may have appeared on Earth before He was born as a baby. Either way, we know God was with them. Just like God was present in the fire with Shadrach, Meschach and Abednego, Jesus stepped down to be with us in our broken world. Not only did He join us here, but He paid the price for our sins, making it possible for us to live with Him forever.

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Review

BIBLE REVIEW VIDEO

Play Bible Review Video. Play the game below using teaching slides: Review Game

SUPPLIES:
Video player, Bible Review Video, teaching slides, 12 star stickers, 2 pieces of paper, painter's tape, writing supply

PREP:
Write "A" on one piece of paper and "B" on the other. Tape them on the wall at the front of your space where kids can reach it.

INSTRUCTIONS: *Call up two kids at a time and give each a star sticker. Kids will indicate their answer by placing a sticker on the correct page. Choose new players after every question.*

1. **Because God's favor was on Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, what job did they get?**
   A. Video game designers
   B. Overseeing all business in Babylon

2. **What did Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego do when everyone bowed down to Nebuchadnezzar's statue?**
   A. Refused to worship something other than the one true God
   B. Hid in the bathroom

3. **What did Nebuchadnezzar see in the furnace with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego?**
   A. A tornado of smoke
   B. A fourth man who looked like a son of the gods.

4. **What was a sign of God's protection in the fiery furnace?**
   A. Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego made s'mores.
   B. Their clothes didn't even smell like smoke.

5. **Why is God worthy of worship?**
   A. God is greater than anyone or anything.
   B. God is just like your favorite celebrity.

God is greater than anyone or anything. No one is like Him.

6. **How do we worship God even when those around us don't?**
   A. God gives us courage.
   B. We should only praise God at church.

We can trust God is always with us, and He gives courage to honor Him no matter what is happening.

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